



SACRAMENTO - SAN JOAQUIN

DELTA CONSERVANCY

A California State Agency

Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program

DRAFT GRANT GUIDELINES AND **STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN**

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Contact Information

More information can be found at <[SSJDC Prop 68 website](#)>. For questions or assistance please contact the Conservancy at prop68@deltaconservancy.ca.gov.

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This document provides guidance on how to apply for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy's Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program. This non-competitive grant program, funded through Proposition 68, focuses on promoting a robust Delta economy and increased public access to recreational opportunities.

A. Background

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is a 1,300-square mile estuary, the largest on the west coast of North and South America. The Delta has a distinct natural, agricultural, and cultural heritage. In March 2019, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area (NHA) was signed into legislation. An NHA is a "large lived-in landscape" where "natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape." (National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov>)

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy (Conservancy) works collaboratively and in coordination with local communities, leading efforts to protect, enhance, and restore the Delta's economy, agriculture and working landscapes, and environment, for the benefit of the Delta region, its local communities, and the citizens of California.

Voters approved the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68) (Division 45 of the Public Resources Code (PRC), commencing with Section 80000) in June 2018. Proposition 68 recognizes the importance of tourism to rural economies, the need for recreation for health and well-being, and an historic underinvestment in outdoor infrastructure in disadvantaged communities around the state. Proposition 68 identifies \$12 million for the Conservancy to use according to its governing statutes for its specified purposes (PRC 45 Sec. 80110). Per Proposition 68 and the Conservancy's governing statute (Division 22.3 of the PRC, commencing with Section 32300), the Conservancy's Proposition 68 Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program will be used to advance the work of the Conservancy's overall Community and Economic Enhancement Program. The grant program seeks to advance recreation and tourism, historic and cultural preservation, and environmental education in order to sustain the Delta's heritage and enhance the unique values of the Delta today. Proposition 68 requires an entity receiving funding through this bond to adopt a "strategic master plan". This document serves as the Strategic Master Plan for the Proposition 68 Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program (PRC 45 Sec. 80112). All proposed projects must be consistent with statewide priorities as identified in Proposition 68, the Conservancy's governing statute and current strategic plan, *The Delta Plan*, and the *Economic Sustainability Plan for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta*.

<create links>

B. Community and Economic Enhancement Program Priorities

The Conservancy seeks to fund a breadth of projects that benefit Delta communities and help to improve opportunities for recreation, tourism, and education. The Conservancy will prioritize funding for projects that address one or more of the following priorities. Examples are included for reference and are not all inclusive or exhaustive.

1. RECREATION AND TOURISM – Expand recreation and tourism opportunities in the Delta that are compatible with the unique natural and cultural value of the Delta. Examples include:
 - a. Design, construction, or expansion of:
 - i. Public docks, or other fishing access
 - ii. Public boating infrastructure including ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)-accessible boating facilities
 - iii. Community parks or picnic sites
 - b. Water or hiking trails
 - c. Bike routes
 - d. Design and installation of kiosks, visitor centers, or permanent signage that promotes recreation or tourism
 - e. Improvement of publicly-owned levees (other than routine or periodic maintenance activities) for better access for bank fishing
 - f. Agritourism that supports Delta communities and promotes access and education regarding agriculture and working landscapes in the Delta
2. HISTORIC AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION – Preserve the historic and cultural significance of the Delta to increase opportunities for community access to, and awareness of, those resources. Examples include:
 - a. Renovation of a historic building for public use
 - b. Development of a culturally-relevant historic district
3. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION – Increase awareness about the value and challenges of wildlife, ecosystems, and other natural aspects of the Delta.
 - a. Design and installation of kiosks, visitor centers, or permanent signage that promotes multilingual environmental education

NOTE: The Conservancy will consider projects that do not directly address one of these priorities, but that provide significant benefit to the Delta and that are aligned with other requirements as outlined in these Grant Guidelines and Strategic Master Plan.

C. Disadvantaged and Severely Disadvantaged Communities

Proposition 68 requires that at least 20 percent of all funding be spent on projects that serve severely disadvantaged communities (SDAC) (80008(a)(1)). The Conservancy will actively seek to fund projects that benefit disadvantaged communities (DAC) and SDACs. An SDAC is a community with a median household income less than 60 percent of the statewide average, and a DAC is a community with a median household income less than 80 percent of the statewide average (80002).

Projects must be bond eligible and have a significant capital asset component. Examples of ways in which a bond-eligible project might provide benefit to a DAC or SDAC include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Training and workforce education
- Job opportunities
- Recreational amenities
- Educational opportunities
- Increased resilience to climate change
- Reduced flooding
- Reduced pollution burden

The Conservancy will prioritize projects that serve DACs and SDACs for its technical assistance efforts. Mapping tools available for the purpose of identifying SDACs and DACs by census tract and/or block group are available on the Parks for All Californians website (<http://www.parksforcalifornia.org/communities>) and the Disadvantaged Communities Mapping Tool (<https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/dacs/>). The Conservancy will consider other sources for identification of SDACs and DACs as well.

D. Project Types

The Conservancy will grant funds for the planning or implementation phase of a bond-eligible project and for land acquisition projects.

Planning Projects

Planning projects advance pre-project activities necessary for a specific, bond-eligible, on-the-ground project. Please note that receiving a planning grant does not guarantee that an implementation grant will be awarded for the same project.

Examples of planning project activities include:

- Project scoping: partnership development, outreach to impacted parties, stakeholder coordination, negotiation of site access or land tenure
- Planning and design: engineering design, identifying appropriate best management practices
- Environmental compliance: permitting, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) activities, Delta Plan consistency

Pilot Projects are a special subset of planning projects, and must inform the implementation of an on-the-ground, bond-eligible implementation project. Pilot projects that are large in scale or duration may be considered implementation projects.

Implementation Projects

Implementation projects are on-the-ground projects that result in the construction, improvement, or acquisition of a capital asset that will be maintained for a minimum of 15 years. Implementation projects are “shovel-ready” projects.

Land Acquisitions

The Conservancy may award funds for a land acquisition project. Acquisition projects must adhere to the following requirements.

- Proposals for acquisition of real property must address the requirements in PRC § 32364.5(b).
- Property must be acquired from a willing seller and in compliance with current laws governing acquisition of real property by public agencies in an amount not to exceed fair market value, as approved by the State (Government Code, Chapter 16, section 7260 et seq.).

E. Grant Terms

Grant Funding Term

The grant funding terms are generally three years, during which time grantees may incur and be reimbursed for grant-related expenses.

Grant Term

The total grant term will extend 15 years beyond the grant funding term, during which time implementation projects must be maintained to comply with State General Obligation Bond Law (Government Code (GC) Section 16727). [<create link>](#)

For implementation projects, grantees must submit their final report and invoice at the end of the Grant Funding Term, but will be held to the terms of the grant agreement until the end of the Grant Term.

F. Program Eligibility

To be considered for funding through the Conservancy’s Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program, eligibility must be met in four areas: bond, geographic, applicant, and project eligibility.

Bond Eligibility

General obligation bond funds must be spent on capital assets. Capital assets are defined as tangible property that has an expected useful life of no less than 15 years. (GC § 16727 (a))

Geographic Eligibility

The Conservancy will fund projects within or benefitting the Delta and Suisun Marsh as defined in PRC § 85058. A map can be found at this link: [<create link>](#)

The Conservancy may fund a project outside the Delta and Suisun Marsh if the Conservancy Board makes all the findings described in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act of 2009, Sec. 32360(g). [<create link>](#)

Applicant eligibility

- **California public agencies.** California public agencies include any city, county, district, or joint powers authority; State agencies; or California public colleges and universities.
- **Nonprofit organizations.** “Nonprofit organization” means an organization that is qualified to do business in California and qualified under section 501(c)(3) of Title 26 of the United States Code. An eligible nonprofit organization has among its principal charitable purposes preservation of land for scientific, recreational, scenic, or open-space opportunities, protection of the natural environment, preservation or enhancement of wildlife, preservation of cultural and historical resources, or efforts to provide for the enjoyment of public lands.

Project Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a grant award from the Conservancy under this program, projects must:

- Provide significant benefit to the Delta
- Be consistent with program objectives and priorities as defined in the Delta Conservancy’s Proposition 68 Grant Guidelines
- Be consistent with the Conservancy’s mission and enabling legislation
- Be consistent with the Conservancy’s strategic plan
- Align with the priorities of the Delta Plan
- Comply with Proposition 68, State General Obligation Bond Law, and other applicable State and federal laws

Ineligible projects

Projects not eligible for funding under Proposition 68 include:

- Planning projects that do not relate to an eligible implementation project.
- Projects dictated by a legal settlement or mandated to address a violation of, or an order (citation) to comply with, a law or regulation.
- Projects that subsidize or decrease the pre-existing mitigation obligations of any party.

G. Cost Share

Cost share is the portion of the project expense borne by private, local, state, and federal funding partners other than the Conservancy. Cost sharing encourages and demonstrates collaboration and cooperation. Conservancy staff will consult with project proponents to determine if cost share is available. Applicants stating that they have a cost share component

must provide commitment letters from cost share partners before a proposal is recommended for funding; these letters must specifically confirm the dollar amount committed. Consistent with provisions of Proposition 68, all applicants are encouraged to provide cost share to support their project (Sec 80001(b)(2)).

H. Eligible Expenses

Direct Costs

Direct costs are eligible for reimbursement if they can be specifically and easily identified as generated by, and are in accordance with, the provisions or activity requirements of the project, and are for work performed within the specified terms and conditions of the grant agreement.

Indirect Costs

Indirect costs associated with personnel services and general operating expenses that do not have a specific, direct relationship to the project but are a requirement for the completion of the project are also eligible for reimbursement at the actual rate, not to exceed twenty (20) percent of Conservancy-funded personnel services and general operating expenses.

I. Ineligible Expenses

Grant funding may not be used to:

- Establish or increase an endowment or legal defense fund.
- Make a monetary donation to other organizations.
- Pay for food or refreshments.
- Pay for tours.
- Purchase computer software.
- Pay for eminent domain processes.
- Subsidize or decrease the mitigation obligations of any party.

J. Application Process

The Conservancy's Proposition 68 Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program is a non-competitive program. Concept proposals may be submitted at any time to initiate consideration of a project by the Conservancy. Project proponents must submit a concept proposal using the Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program Concept Proposal Form available on the Conservancy's website [<insert link>](#). The Conservancy will review each concept proposal as it is submitted. Once reviewed, the Conservancy will confer with the applicant to discuss the project concept, request additional information as needed, and discuss next steps. An in-person meeting and/or a site visit may also be deemed necessary at this step. Based on information gathered through these steps, along with input from technical experts if needed, staff will evaluate the viability of the proposed project to determine if the proposed project:

- Is technically and financially feasible.

- Is likely to provide locally-supported benefits to the Delta
- Will significantly advance the Conservancy's community and economic enhancement priorities

This may be an iterative process between staff and the project proponent. If staff determines that a project does not fit with the Conservancy's grant program at this time, as resources allow, staff may provide assistance in assessing potential steps to seek alternate funding.

If staff determines that a project concept appears to be viable and fits within the Conservancy's Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program, staff will work with project proponent(s) to develop the concept into a full proposal. The Conservancy may provide technical assistance. Technical assistance is intended to facilitate the development of project proposals and the ability of project proponents to secure funding through the Conservancy's program, and may also be provided to assist in areas of implementation. The Conservancy will prioritize projects benefitting disadvantaged communities for its technical assistance efforts.

The project proposal will be assessed per the criteria in *Section K. Assessment Process* of this document. Once final determination is made, the proposal may be presented to the Board for consideration of funding.

Application Process Steps

Step 1: Applicant completes concept proposal form and submits to the Conservancy

**Step 2: Conservancy staff reviews proposal and confers with project proponents.
Site visit is arranged if deemed necessary.**

Step 3: Conservancy staff reviews information gathered and consults with technical experts if needed

Step 4: Conservancy staff determines if proposed project is viable and fits within the grant program.

Step 5: Conservancy staff confers with applicant to discuss next steps

Step 6: If project has been determined to be viable, staff works with project proponent to develop full proposal

Step 7: Full proposal is assessed and final determination is made

Step 8: Final proposal may be presented to Conservancy Board for consideration of funding

NOTE: The Conservancy will consider the geographic distribution of projects, project locations related to disadvantaged communities, reasonableness of costs, diversity of project types, and may prioritize projects based on these considerations.

K. Assessment Process

The Conservancy will work closely with project proponents in the development of the project proposal. As such, project assessment will occur upon initial discussion and throughout the project development process. Conservancy staff will consult external experts as needed.

Assessment Criteria

Conservancy staff will not recommend that the Conservancy Board fund a proposal unless the following criteria have been addressed to the satisfaction of the Conservancy and the project proponent.

1. Project design

Clarity on the project purpose, goals, deliverables, and schedule. Is the project approach well designed and appropriate for meeting the objectives and deliverables of the project?

2. Public benefits

Does the project provide multiple tangible, enduring, public benefits with a high likelihood that the benefits will be realized? Is the need for the specific project clearly identified and explained? Are the economic and/or community benefits explained and reasonable? Will the project benefit disadvantaged communities?

3. Alignment with funding and program goals and related state priorities.

Does the project align with the following? **<create links>**:

- The Conservancy's mission, governing statutes, and strategic plan
- The priorities of the Delta Plan
- Proposition 68 and other relevant local, regional, state, and federal plans

4. Project readiness

Is the project ready to proceed promptly if funded? For planning projects, how well does the proposal demonstrate how the proposed planning activities will advance the project toward implementation in a timely manner? For implementation projects, how complete is project planning, including the status of CEQA and permitting efforts? When will the project be ready to begin implementation?

2. Community and institutional support

Does the project have public and relevant institutional support at the local, regional, State, or federal scale? Is the local community, or are other stakeholders, engaged in project planning or delivery? Is there clear and demonstrable community outreach and support for the project and any community economic benefits?

3. Cost Share

Does the applicant or other project partner(s) provide in-kind services and/or is federal, state, private, or local cost share funding secured? Have non-monetary and/or funding

resources of agencies and organizations other than the Conservancy been identified and secured?

4. Project budget

Is the budget adequate and reasonable for the project? Are costs clearly identified, supported, and meet reasonable levels of fees for service?

5. Project team

Do the project organizer and partners have the necessary experience and sufficient capacity to implement the project as described? To what extent does the proposal describe appropriate organizational capacity and demonstrate the appropriate qualifications of affiliated staff and committed partners? To what extent does the proposal demonstrate that necessary partnerships have been developed?

6. Long-term management

For implementation projects, how well does the proposal demonstrate plans for long-term management and sustainability of the project for the required minimum of 15 years? For planning projects, how well does the proposal demonstrate next steps for movement towards an implementation project with a 15-year useful life?

L. Privacy Rights

Please note: once an applicant has submitted a proposal to the Conservancy, any privacy rights, as well as other confidentiality protections afforded by law with respect to the application package, are waived. All proposals are public records under the California Government Code sections 6250-6276.48 and will be provided to the public upon request.

M. Program Requirements

Performance Monitoring

All implementation, acquisition, and pilot project proposals will include a performance monitoring and assessment framework that identifies the performance measures that will be used to demonstrate public benefits, how they will be monitored and assessed, and how monitoring data will be reported. This may be developed in consultation with Conservancy staff and developed to reflect the unique benefits of individual projects.

Performance measures are used to track progress toward project goals and desired outcomes. They provide a means of reliably measuring and reporting the outcomes and effectiveness of a project and how it contributes value to the Delta and State.

Long-term Management

The goal of long-term management is to foster the ongoing success of the project, ensuring that the benefits arising from the project endure beyond the end of the Grant Funding Term. Proposals will describe future project or land management activities, explaining how the project, once implemented, will be stewarded for at least 15 years per the requirement for capital outlay projects as specified in the [State General Obligation Bond Law](#). Properties restored, enhanced, or protected, and facilities constructed or enhanced with funds provided

by the Conservancy shall be operated, used, and maintained consistent with the purposes of the grant.

California Conservation Corps

Consistent with Proposition 68 recommendations, all implementation projects that involve a site improvement component shall consult with representatives of both the California Conservation Corps and California Association of Local Conservation Corps to determine the feasibility of Corps participation. Planning projects or other projects that do not include a site improvement component are exempt. The Corps has developed Bond Guidelines [<insert link>](#) that fully describe the consultation process.

Local Notifications

In compliance with the Conservancy's governing statute (Public Resources Code section 32363), the Conservancy will notify local government agencies – such as counties, cities, and local districts – as well as relevant tribal entities, about eligible grant projects in their area being considered for funding. The Conservancy will work with the applicant to make all reasonable efforts to address concerns raised by local government entities.

Environmental Compliance

Activities funded under this grant program must comply with applicable State and federal laws and regulations, including the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) the Delta Plan, and other environmental permitting requirements. Conservancy staff may assist the applicant with the compliance process; however, the applicant is solely responsible for project compliance. Applicants should be prepared to submit any permits, surveys, or reports that support the status of their environmental compliance.

N. Grant Awards and Agreements

For each awarded grant, the Conservancy will develop a grant agreement with detailed provisions and requirements specific to that project. A draft grant agreement template is provided on the Conservancy's Proposition 68 Grant Program web page [<create link>](#). Please be aware that for grants awarded by the Conservancy:

- Actual awards are conditional upon funds being available from the State.
- In most circumstances, grant eligible costs will be paid in arrears on a reimbursement basis (with the exception of acquisition costs), require supporting documentation, and may be subject to audit.
- For all implementation projects, adequate proof of land tenure allowing the grantee to access property to construct and maintain the proposed project must be in place prior to the disbursement of funds.
- For implementation projects, funds for construction will not be disbursed until all required environmental compliance and permitting documents have been received by the Conservancy, including certification of consistency with the Delta Plan.

- The grantee is required to certify as part of the grant agreement that it is the grantee's responsibility to comply with all federal, State, and local laws that apply to the project.
- Grantees will not be reimbursed if any of the following conditions occur:
 - The grantee has been non-responsive or does not meet the conditions outlined in the grant proposal and grant agreement;
 - the project has received alternative funding from other sources that duplicates the portion of work or costs funded by a Conservancy grant;
 - the project has changed and is no longer eligible for funding; or
 - the grantee requests to end the project.
- All projects will be required to provide progress reports at a frequency agreed to in a grant agreement during the Grant Funding Term and a final report prior to receiving the final reimbursement. Specific reporting requirements will be included in the grant agreement.
- To the extent practicable, grantees shall inform the public that the project received funds through the Delta Conservancy and from the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Sec. 80001(b)(3)). Grantees shall recognize the Conservancy on signs, websites, press or promotional materials, advertisements, publications, or exhibits that they prepare or approve and that reference funding of a project. For implementation projects, grantees shall post signs at the project site acknowledging the source of the funds. Size, location, and number of signs shall be approved by the Conservancy.
- Grants awarded through the Conservancy's Community and Economic Enhancement grant program may be subject to prevailing wage provisions of Part 7 of Division 2 of the California Labor Code (CLC), commencing with section 1720. The grantee shall pay prevailing wage to all persons employed in the performance of any part of the project if required by law to do so. Any questions of interpretation regarding the CLC should be directed to the Director of the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR), the State department having jurisdiction in these matters. For details, please refer to the DIR website at <http://dir.ca.gov>.